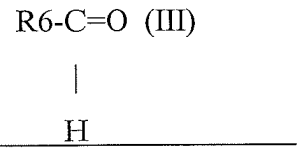
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims:

1-13. (Canceled)

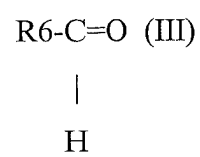
14. (Currently amended) A method for preserving and/or storing a microorganism which exhibits at least one nitrilase enzyme activity, comprising preserving and/or storing the microorganism in an aqueous medium which comprises at least one aldehyde, wherein the total aldehyde concentration is in the range from 0.1 to 100 mM and the at least one aldehyde is described by the formula III



Wherein R6 is unsubstituted, branched or unbranched, C1-C10-alkyl or C2-C10-alkenyl, or substituted or unsubstituted aryl or hetaryl,

and wherein the aqueous medium does not comprise any additions of cyanide compounds.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the at least one aldehyde is described by the formula III



where R6 ~~can be substituted or unsubstituted, branched or unbranched, C1-C10-alkyl or C2-C10-alkenyl or~~ is substituted or unsubstituted aryl or hetaryl.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the preservation step is carried out before the cells are treated with a reactant whose reaction is to be catalyzed by the cells.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the aldehyde is selected from the group consisting of unsubstituted benzaldehyde and substituted benzaldehydes.

19. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 14, wherein the microorganism is selected from the species of the Enterobacteriaceae or Nocardiaceae family.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of Pseudomonas, Burkholderia, Nocardia, Acetobacter, Gluconobacter, Corynebacterium, Brevibacterium, Bacillus, Clostridium, Cyanobacter, Staphylococcus, Aerobacter, Alcaligenes, Rhodococcus and Penicillium.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, further ~~combined with at least one method for stabilizing, preserving and/or storing enzymes, wherein said at least one method is selected from the group consisting of:~~ comprising adding into the aqueous medium

a) ~~adding~~ at least one inorganic salt at a concentration of at least 100 mM; or

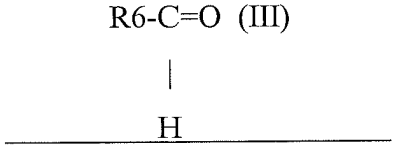
b) ~~adding metal salts whose metal cation functions as a nitrilase prosthetic group; and~~

~~c) adding~~ amides.

22-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A method for preserving and/or storing a microorganism which exhibits at least one nitrilase enzyme activity, comprising

(a) preserving and/or storing the microorganism in an aqueous medium which comprises at least one aldehyde, wherein the total aldehyde concentration is in the range from 0.1 to 100 mM and the at least one aldehyde is described by the formula III

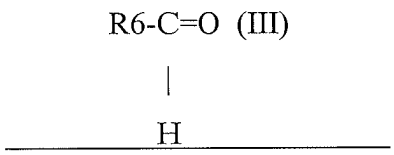


Wherein R6 is unsubstituted, branched or unbranched, C1-C10-alkyl or C2-C10-alkenyl, or substituted or unsubstituted aryl or hetaryl,

and wherein the aqueous medium does not comprise any additions of cyanide compounds, and

(b) adding at least one inorganic salt at a concentration of at least 100 mM~~, and/or adding metal salts whose metal cation functions as a nitrilase prosthetic group~~.

28. (Currently amended) A method for preserving and/or storing a microorganism which exhibits at least one nitrilase enzyme activity, comprising preserving and/or storing the microorganism in an aqueous medium which comprises at least one aldehyde, wherein the total aldehyde concentration is in the range from 0.1 to 100 mM and the at least one aldehyde is described by the formula III



Wherein R6 is unsubstituted, branched or unbranched, C1-C10-alkyl or C2-C10-alkenyl, or substituted or unsubstituted aryl or hetaryl,

wherein the aqueous medium does not comprise any additions of cyanide compounds, and wherein the microorganism is of recombinant origin.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the nitrilase enzyme activity is preserved for a period of up to 37 days.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the preserving and/or storing is at 0°C to 22°C.

31. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the aldehyde is selected from the group consisting of unsubstituted benzaldehyde and substituted benzaldehydes.

32. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the aldehyde is selected from the group consisting of unsubstituted benzaldehyde and substituted benzaldehydes.

33. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the aldehyde is chlorobenzaldehyde, bromobenzaldehyde, or methylbenzaldehyde.

34. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the aldehyde is chlorobenzaldehyde, bromobenzaldehyde, or methylbenzaldehyde.

35. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the aldehyde is chlorobenzaldehyde, bromobenzaldehyde, or methylbenzaldehyde.